

What is Claimed is:

1. A method of authenticating a software license for a software of a computer system, the computer system having an identifier, the software is associated with an engraved signature that is an encryption based on the identifier using an encryption method; the method of authenticating comprising
  - 5 retrieving the identifier from the computer system;  
encrypting the identifier using the encryption method to obtain a computed signature;  
comparing the computed signature to the engraved signature; and  
halting execution of the software where the computed signature does not
  - 10 match the engraved signature;  
wherein the encryption method is a one-way encryption algorithm.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the encryption algorithm is called Block Cipher SQUARE.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of decrypting the engraved signature before comparing with the computed signature where the engraved signature has been encrypted.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the engraved signature has been encrypted and decrypted using another one-way encryption algorithm.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the identifier comprises at least one of a MAC address of a Network Interface Card, a serial number of a CPU, a hard drive format code number, and a code number of computer system "add-ons".

6. A software protection system, comprising  
a computer system having an identifier and software;  
an engraved signature stored on the computer system; and  
a program executed by the computer system for retrieving the engraved  
signature, retrieving the identifier from the computer system; encrypting the  
identifier using an encryption method to obtain a computed signature; comparing  
the computed signature to the engraved signature; and halting execution of the  
software where the computed signature does not match the engraved signature;  
wherein the encryption method is a one-way encryption algorithm.
7. The system of claim 6, wherein the encryption algorithm is called Block  
Cipher SQUARE.
8. The system of claim 6, further comprising the program decrypting the  
engraved signature before comparing with the computed signature where the  
engraved signature has been encrypted.
9. The system of claim 8, wherein the engraved signature has been  
encrypted and decrypted using another one-way encryption algorithm.
10. The system of claim 6, wherein the identifier comprises at least one of a  
MAC address of a Network Interface Card, a serial number of a CPU, a hard  
drive format code number, and a code number of computer system "add-ons".

11. An article, comprising  
a computer-readable signal-bearing medium having software;  
means in the medium for engraving an engraved signature on a computer  
system having an identifier; and

means recorded on the medium for retrieving the engraved signature from the computer system, retrieving the identifier from the computer system; encrypting the identifier using an encryption method to obtain a computed signature; comparing the computed signature to the engraved signature; and halting execution of the software where the computed signature does not match the engraved signature;

wherein the encryption method is a one-way encryption algorithm.

12. The article of claim 11, wherein the encryption algorithm is called Block Cipher SQUARE.

13. The article of claim 11, further comprising the program decrypting the engraved signature before comparing with the computed signature where the engraved signature has been encrypted.

14. The article of claim 13, wherein the engraved signature has been encrypted and decrypted using another one-way encryption algorithm.

15. The article of claim 11, wherein the identifier comprises at least one of a MAC address of a Network Interface Card, a serial number of a CPU, a hard drive format code number, and a code number of computer system "add-ons".